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REPORT

# INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR (Urals and Donets Basin)

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SUBJECT PW Camps and Industries

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PW camps and industries in the USSR

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## 2. The following information concerning [redacted] imprisonment in the USSR [redacted] 50X1-HUM

a. Camps [redacted]

- 1) June 1945 to the end of 1946: Arsha in the Urals.
- 2) The end of 1946 to June 1947: Tchernikovo in the Urals. Channikovo
- 3) June to October 1947: Odessa.
- 4) October 1947 to February 1949: Camps Krasny Luch, Schacht Karl-Marx and
- 5) February 1949 to May 1949: Melitopol, Ukraine. /Kramatorsk, Donetsk Basin.
- 6) May to November 1949: Sevastopol Kramatorsk.
- 7) November 1949: [redacted] Melitopol [redacted]

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b. Political information [redacted]

- 1) In all the camps [redacted] the prisoners were forced to attend political propaganda courses. These courses, held at least twice a week after work, lasted several hours. Until 1946, they consisted only of general indoctrination in the Marxist theories. At the end of 1946, however, the propaganda was clearly directed against the United States and countries of Western Europe, and anti-American posters were displayed in the camps.
- 2) Until the end of 1946, this propaganda was quite successful among the German prisoners who were unaware of the fate of the people of occupied Germany. In 1947, however, when correspondence was permitted with the people of Germany, the prisoners realized that the propaganda was outrageously exaggerated and that the existing Soviet regime in Germany

Arsha = 42-37N, 44-35E

Channikovo = 58-22N, 4316E

Krasny Luch = 48-08N, 38-56E

Kramatorsk = 48-43N, 37-32E

Melitopol = 46-50N, 35-22E

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was far from the picture painted for them by the Soviet authorities. In general, it can be said that very few of the prisoners actually adopted the Communist theories. Many of them appeared to follow Marx' teachings in order to avoid torture and harsh treatment.

- 3) At Arscha there were 3,000 prisoners and at Tchernikovo, 2,500. All together in this area in the Urals there were approximately 16,000 prisoners in 1946.

*Channikovo*

4)

5)

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6)

- 7) At Krasniluch, [redacted] a camp of 900 prisoners. Although the propaganda program here was even more intense than at the camps in the Urals (compulsory attendance three times a week or no food), the results were not encouraging to the Soviets. After 1947, the prisoners were continually subjected to the Soviet propaganda and to harsh treatment.

- 8) At Schacht Karl-Marx, 150 kms. south of Krasniluch, 3,000 prisoners worked in the coal mines. The Soviet name of the locality is not known. [redacted] The propaganda program here was similar to that at Krasniluch.

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*Kramatorsk*

- 9) At Krimator, a place on the edge of the Donetz Basin 40 kms. from Stalino, 1,200 prisoners worked. At Melitopol, only 500, but this was a very important propaganda center. Propaganda was less important at Sevastopol where 1,800 prisoners worked ceaselessly on reconstruction projects.
- 10) The propaganda was directly controlled by the MVD. The Soviet officers who belonged to this service gave the texts to German Communist interpreters (usually PW's themselves) and to members of Antifa, a special school which was attended only by prisoners known to be convinced Communists. In all the camps, large or small, there were stool pigeons who reported the names of these prisoners who attended the courses unwillingly.

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- 11) In 1949 the Soviets reported in their propaganda courses that the Belgian Communist Party had received 90% of the votes in the June 1949 elections.
- 12) At <sup>Kramatorst</sup> ~~Kramatorst~~ 30 German prisoners attended an Antifa school simultaneously with 12 Soviet officers. All the Germans were volunteers. Similar schools existed in Moscow and Stalino. At Karakisch (near Krasnilouch), 1,200 men attended special courses. They consisted of former SS men or members of the Adolf Hitler Leibstandarte.

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- 13) At Odessa, during these courses, the Soviets asked those prisoners who were about to be repatriated to devote themselves to spreading Communist propaganda in their own countries and to agitate at anti-Communist meetings, promising them help in case of eventual trouble. They were told to agitate especially among the young people, 13-16 years of age, so that an elite corps of Communists would be formed for use at a later date. The Belgian prisoners were also asked to fight against the return of Leopold III. Explain to the people of the West, they were told, that the Soviets would make a veritable Eden of their countries, that the regimes would differ from that applied to the Soviet Union by reason of the differences of race, mentality, etc.
- 14) At Pentecost, 1947, the PW's had organized a religious fete with the few means they had at hand. The Soviets, seeing that so far their propaganda had been in vain, stated that the prisoners would not be sent home before 1949.

c. Industrial information.

- 1) The prisoners were not capable of furnishing much information as they were kept away from the interesting industries. Those who gave information in detail usually exaggerated. The Soviet population themselves know very little of the resources of their country. 50X1-HUM
- 2) At Arscha, [redacted] In this locality, 30,000 Soviets worked in the blast furnaces to which no prisoners were admitted. Old iron and steel arrived by train but the finished material was shipped out in sealed cars. It probably consisted of armor for tanks. At the beginning of 1946 there was a large explosion in the vicinity, but there was never any talk about it. 50X1-HUM
- 3) At <sup>Channikova</sup> Tchernikovo, [redacted] A packing case factory was also located here. The cases, of various sizes, were shipped empty to Arscha. 50X1-HUM
- 4) [redacted] there were very important industries located at ~~Scheloupsinsk~~ Chelyabinsk in the Urals. 50X1-HUM

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- 5) At Odessa [redacted] construction of a new factory called KREKIN which was to serve as an oil refinery. The oil will be carried to the port by means of a subterranean canal, built at a depth of 2.5 meters. The factory, which has a radius of 2.5 kms. is connected with the port by a canal 3 km. long. It was completed in July and immediately all the prisoners were removed. 50X1-HUM
- 6) At Krasnoluch [redacted] There were at that location three coal mines and no industries. 50X1-HUM
- 7) At Schacht Karl-Marx there were no industries, only mines.
- 8) At <sup>Kramatorsk</sup> ~~Kramatorsk~~, various import ant industries extended for 9 kms. The prisoners were admitted only in the first 4 kms., working in the founderies, steelworks and factories which manufactured tanks and naval vessels. In the zone where prisoners were not admitted, there were four blast furnaces and seven large buildings whose purpose the prisoners were never able to determine. Seventy-five thousand men were employed in these industries, working night and day in eight-hour shifts.
- 9) [redacted] constructing an "autostrade" from Moscow Sevastopol seven meters wide and made of asphalt. [redacted] 50X1-HUM
- 10) Sevastopol [redacted] The town had been completely destroyed during the war, but the barracks had been reconstructed as well as a new barracks housing 2,000 soldiers. Military garrisons were numerous. The entire population was occupied in the reconstruction of the town and of the fortress. The fortress possesses an underground two-track railway, 16 kms. long. The railway was forbidden to the prisoners.

d. Miscellaneous information.

- 1) The prisoners were always badly cared for and ill treated until 1947 at which time the treatment was ameliorated.
- 2) The Soviet soldiers said that if there were another war they would take only as many prisoners as they could care for. Others said that the PW's still remaining in Russia at the outbreak of another conflict would be killed. police of the
- 3) The Russian people are completely dominated by the regime. Communism is said to be in regression and the population feels that a new war will liberate it from the Communist leaders. The workers asked the prisoners how the Americans treated their prisoners. In case of war, numerous Soviets reportedly will be defeatists. The workers were interested in the fate of countries "occupied" by the Americans.

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- 4) Police control is much too strong to permit a revolt.
- 5) The USSR does not hide its extreme fear of the American air power.
- 6) Prisoners who signed an agreement never to carry arms against the USSR were given supplementary rations.
- 7) Those who did not want to attend the propaganda courses were interrogated on their past, that of their parents and their grandparents. These interrogations were exhausting, lasting four to five hours, and were accompanied by harsh corporal punishment. If a prisoner could not state precisely where his grandfather was born or died he was suspected.
- 8) In principle prisoners were permitted to write one letter a month after 1947, but nine out of ten letters disappeared.
- 9) The Soviets state officially that there are still 890,000 men in prison camps in the USSR. There are probably about 80,000 more in the camps than are mentioned in the statistics. The prisoners call these camps "Schweigenlagern" (camps of silence). Such a camp exists at Melitopol. In these camps, a functionaire of the MVD guards 100 prisoners and the control is extremely severe.

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